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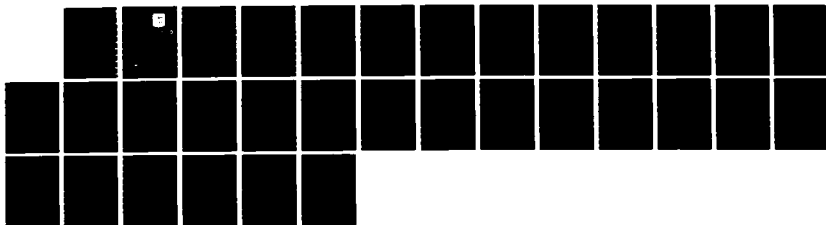
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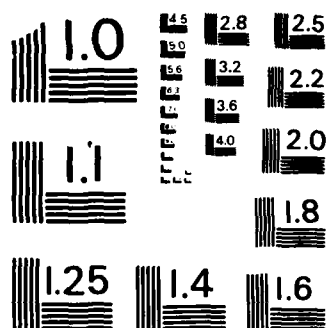
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STUDENT ESSAY

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CUBA AFTER FIDEL CASTRO

BY

COMMANDER BRUCE A. WILKINS, USN

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USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

CUBA AFTER FIDEL CASTRO

INDIVIDUAL ESSAY

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ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Bruce A. Willkins, CDR, USN

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The underlying questions are who will succeed Fidel Castro as the leader of Cuba, what foreign and domestic policy changes can be expected to occur under a successive regime, and what implications new Cuban leadership may have for U.S. security and policies in the region. Possible U.S. courses of action at the death of Castro were examined. Data was gathered using a literature search. Fidel Castro's current health was studied and hypothesis was made concerning his potential to stay in power. Possible successors to Fidel were considered and the resultant changes in personality and leadership ability were analyzed. Since Fidel's success appears to be personality dependent to a great degree, changes in domestic and foreign policies under a new regime were considered. The events leading to current U.S. policy toward Cuba were briefly examined and possible alternatives for U.S. actions upon the death of Fidel Castro were analyzed.

CUBA AFTER FIDEL CASTRO

A small island, roughly the size of Pennsylvania and lying only 90 miles from Key West, Cuba has been of great policy and strategic concern for the last seven U.S. presidents. Since 1959, American policy planners have had to consider the implications of an unfriendly state extremely close to our borders and, more important, the security problems caused by a Soviet backed socialist state in the Western Hemisphere. Fidel Castro, leader of the successful Cuban revolution and head of the Cuban government since 1959, has proven to be a "thorn in the side" of the past seven presidential administrations because of his ties with the Soviet Union and his role as a "tool" of international communist expansion. This essay will endeavor to examine possible successors to Fidel Castro, the effect of Castro's death on Cuba's foreign and domestic policies, and implications for U.S. policies posed by a post-Fidel Castro Cuban government.

Born August 13, 1926, Fidel Castro Ruz is no longer the vigorous, 35 year old revolutionary of the early 1960's. He is, however, apparently in good health as he approaches 60 and is still very much in control of the day to day operation of the Cuban government. There was some speculation by western analysts that he may have been



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developing lung related problems when he was no longer seen with his ever-present cigar, but Castro spoke to that issue before the recently completed Third Congress of the Cuban Communist Party. In his remarks, he stated that he had given up the cigars as an example to the Cuban people that smoking is unhealthy and he encouraged them to do likewise. He did not condemn the exportation of tobacco products, however. Barring assassination or accidental death, Castro could remain a viable leader of Cuba for another fifteen to twenty years and continue to challenge future planners and policy makers in an area important to U.S. interests.

The most probable successor to Fidel Castro is his younger brother Raul Castro Ruz. Born June 3, 1931, Raul is completely loyal to, but more radical and puritanical than his brother. He is Fidel's most trusted advisor and heir apparent to the Cuban leadership. One of Cuba's most efficient organizers, he is a good judge of people for specific jobs and is skilled in delegating responsibility to subordinates. Raul often functions as a principal spokesman for Cuba, both domestically and internationally, and appears to have increased domestic powers as a result of the 1980 Cuban government reorganization and the Third Party Congress where his wife was elevated to full membership in the politburo of the Cuban Communist Party. Generally, Raul lacks his older brother's charisma and apparently is not well liked by the Cuban people. Raul currently serves as

Second Secretary of the Cuban Communist Party, First Vice President of the Councils of Ministers and State, and Minister of Defense. Fidel is apparently uncomfortable with the appearance of nepotism with regard to Raul's present positions and went to great lengths to explain to the delegates at the Third Party Congress that Raul was "elected" to his post of Second Secretary on merit and not due to his family ties to Fidel. In his speech Fidel stated

"The party must have a second secretary, the revolution must have a second leader, and that second secretary and second leader has all the attributes to lead the party and the revolution, and he will assume his functions if -- for any reason -- the first secretary dies, gets sick, or goes mad while at the Central Committee as I said, and this could happen! I hope that this will not happen, but I have to admit that this is a possibility! We said today that this is not a family matter or anything like that. Hence the second secretary was elected; he was elected by the people, above all. It had to be someone who, in our people's opinion, has all the attributes to be a substitute -- which is what we have advocated at all party and state levels. Therefore, the first step was to elect the first secretary; then came the election of the second secretary. Upon our proposal, Comrade Raul Castro Ruz was elected second secretary."¹

While Raul appears to be the mostly likely successor to his brother Fidel, he is not the only alternative. If Raul should prove unable to govern for any number of reasons, another individual may rise to power or, more likely, a ruling junta would probably be formed with Raul as "first among equals." Most of the Cuban Communist Party hierarchy fought alongside Fidel during the revolution and several

could conceivably demonstrate the support necessary to rule alongside Raul in a junta form of government. As previously noted, during the Third Party Congress, Vilma Espin, the wife of Raul Castro, was elevated to full membership in the Politburo. She had previously served as an alternate member, but as a full member with her husband as second secretary, a husband and wife ruling scenario is not an impossibility. The ultimate government following the death of Fidel may take any of several forms, but it is safe to assume that initially, Raul Castro, as second secretary of the Cuban Communist Party (PCC) and Minister of Defense, has the advantage and will succeed his brother as leader of the Cuban people.

What changes in Cuba's foreign and domestic policies will occur with the death of Fidel Castro? Will opportunities arise for the U.S. to lessen tensions with the Cuban leadership? Will Cuba maintain its strong military and economic ties with the Soviet Union after Castro? Will Cuba continue to export revolution to Central and South America at every opportunity? These questions and more contain serious implications for American security in the Western Hemisphere and weigh heavily on the minds of U.S. policy planners.

In examining these questions, it becomes apparent that many of the current policies of the Castro government rely on Fidel Castro, the individual, to "sell" the policies to

the Cuban people. For the past twenty-five years, the Cuban populace has been promised that their lot in life would improve under the socialist/communist system. While it is true that great strides have been made in the areas of education and health related services, the overall economic picture remains bleak. Rationing of most consumer goods has been a fact of Cuban life since the days of the revolution and those goods not rationed are either scarce or unavailable. As is the case in the Soviet Union and East European countries, long lines for everyday "necessities" are the norm in Cuba. Over the years, Fidel Castro has been able to convince the Cuban population that their sacrifices were necessary in the short term to guarantee a better standard of living in the future; all the while blaming conditions on the economic policies of the "Imperialist Yankis" to the north. Would a less skilled communicator and less charismatic leader be able to convince his people to continue to sacrifice? Would Raul or a junta be as successful as Fidel in this area? Reports of unrest and disenchantment with the current quality of life come out of Cuba today. The 10,000 or more Cubans who went to the embassy of Peru to take advantage of passage out of Cuba sent a message to Fidel and the rest of the world that all was not perfect in their homeland. The same message was verified by Cubans now living in the U.S. who were allowed to visit families in Cuba. It is safe to assume that such

unrest and disenchantment would continue and probably grow more widespread under a leadership less revered by the people. This is not to imply that the government could not deal with unrest, but such a public attitude could create problems and lead to some minor changes in the system. But, on the whole, there is nothing to indicate that current domestic policies would change to any degree and a socialist system of government, firmly entrenched, would continue largely unchanged.

If domestic policies remain essentially unchanged, what changes, if any, could be expected in the area of Cuba's foreign policy under a post-Fidel leadership? Does Cuba have a foreign policy of its own, or is it merely a proxy of the Soviet Union in international adventurism? Immediately following the Cuban revolution, there was no hint of Castro's future leanings toward the socialist bloc. By 1961, however, he had signed the first bi-lateral trade agreement with the Soviets and had broken diplomatic relations with the U.S. Castro did not profess to be a Marxist but perceiving a grave threat from the U.S. and from Cubans living in the U.S. wishing to overthrow the fledgling regime, he was forced to turn to the Soviets for survival. This presented a problem for the Soviets in that once Cuba had declared itself a "socialist" state, the Soviets were implicitly responsible for its economic existence. Once a state has become socialist, according to Marxist doctrine,

it cannot retrace its steps through any of the preliminary stages of economic development, particularly capitalism. If a declared socialist state should collapse, it would seriously challenge the very fiber of Marxist-Leninist ideology. Following this line of reasoning, the Soviets had no choice but to support the Cubans and demonstrate to the world the advantages of the socialist system.

The Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 profoundly changed Castro's relationship with the Soviets. In his view, the missiles provided by the Soviets were for the defense of Cuba only. In the view of the U.S., however, the missiles were offensive in nature, and a threat to the U.S. mainland. When the Russians backed down and withdrew the missiles, Castro looked elsewhere for political support: "Castro, dependent on the Soviet Union for economic and military assistance, but resentful over Khrushchev's settlement with Kennedy, vented his ire by adopting a Maoist line on the feasibility of exporting revolution by violent means. This set him in direct opposition to Khrushchev, who advocated a policy of peaceful coexistence."²

During the mid-1960's, Cuba became heavily involved in exporting revolution to Africa and Latin America. Although this created conflicts with the Soviets, it increased Cuba's stature in the Third World and increased the Sino-Soviet rift. With the death of Che Guevara in Bolivia in 1968, it became apparent that Castro's numerous attempts to export

revolution to Latin America had failed. Relations with China began to deteriorate at about the same time, and out of desperation, Castro once again turned to the Soviets. With his endorsement of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968, Castro entered a period of strong alliance with the U.S.S.R.

Jorge Dominguez suggests that 1968 was a crisis year for the Cubans, when everything and everyone seemed to conspire against them. The long-standing economic boycott by the U.S. was continuing, their main source of assistance, the Soviet Union, was employing economic sanctions against them, and even China was refusing to sell as much rice and buy as much sugar as had been contracted for.³ As mentioned above, their revolutionary policies in Latin America were also failing. The combination of all of these factors helped to push the Cubans back to the Soviets, with the sugar disaster of 1970 finishing the process.

The Non-Aligned Movement has been an important influence on Cuba's foreign policy since the early 1960's. At a time when Castro was attempting to reduce reliance on Soviet aid and influence in Cuba, the movement provided a means for involvement in the international arena. The movement's emphasis from the beginning had been on making a place for small countries in the international policy process, and Castro saw Cuba's membership in the Third World organization as a way to balance the pressure from the

United States and the Soviet Union while achieving the international status he so desperately sought. Problems arose for Cuba, however, after the resumption of friendly relations with the Soviets in 1968. Although Castro wanted to remain active in the Non-Aligned Movement, many Third World nations felt that Cuba was too closely allied with the Soviet Union to speak as a non-aligned country. Cuba's involvement in Angola was viewed by many as driven by Soviet expansionist goals in Africa with Cuba acting as a surrogate for the Soviet Union. Cuba maintained that its African involvement was not Soviet inspired, but was intended to liberate from colonial rule descendants of slaves taken to Cuba two centuries earlier. Regardless of his true motivations, Castro's status as a leader of the Non-Aligned Movement suffered serious damage with his support of Soviet objectives in Africa.

In the mid-1980's, Cuba is still pursuing "internationalist" objectives. With an estimated 35,000 troops stationed in Angola and 11,000-13,000 troops fighting in Ethiopia, South Yemen, and Mozambique, Cuba is very heavily involved on the African continent. Cuba's foreign policy goals are not restricted to Africa, however. At the present time, there are an estimated 5,000 troops and advisors in Nicaragua in support of the Sandinista regime of Daniel Ortega. Many analysts have argued that although Cuba's dependence on Soviet military, economic and political

support somewhat limits its considerable freedom of action, Castro nevertheless actively establishes his own policy agenda. In other words, he pursues his own goals while Moscow supports him as long as the Soviets consider his activities useful.

The questions remain; would a post-Fidel Castro regime in Cuba adhere to the present Cuban foreign policy goals? Is Cuba's current foreign policy a product of Soviet influence and direction or is it driven by the ambitions of Fidel Castro? Underlying the entire question of Cuban internationalism and foreign policy is the "person" of Fidel Castro. He has always seemed to see a higher place for Cuba in world affairs than could realistically be expected for a country of Cuba's size and economic potential. He firmly believes in an "internationalist mission" for Cuba, and thus has considerable personal impact on Cuban foreign policy. The charisma embodied in the person of Fidel Castro makes much of Cuba's current international involvement possible and there is little evidence that all of Cuba's current international adventurism is Soviet inspired. In many instances, Cuba appears to take the lead in supporting a revolutionary cause for ideological reasons and subsequently involves the Soviets in support as well. The support of the New Jewel Movement in Grenada is a good example of Cuba encouraging Soviet involvement in Latin America, an area in

which the Soviets have appeared somewhat reluctant to seek involvement.

The use of Cuban troops in Angola has spanned a period in excess of 10 years and some reports out of Cuba indicate that involvement of Cuban troops has lost some of its popular appeal. Much like the U.S. situation in Viet Nam, Cuban troops are fighting and dying in a land half-way around the world for a cause not fully understood or accepted by the Cuban people. Without Fidel's leadership and his deep seated penchant for international involvement for Cuba, it is probable that national interest in and support for the African campaigns would wither. Once again, his personal success as a communicator and his ability to exhort the Cuban people to fulfill his personal vision for Cuba as a nation appear to be the driving force behind his country's extended involvement in a war in Africa. There is no evidence to suggest that a succeeding regime in Cuba would pursue international involvement with the same enthusiasm demonstrated by the current regime. The Soviets, through economic pressures, could certainly "encourage" any subsequent regime to assist the Socialist cause worldwide and when they felt it necessary to function through a surrogate, would likely call on Cuba.

The situation in Nicaragua is similar to Grenada in that Cuba became involved initially and subsequently enlisted the aid of the Soviets. In this particular

instance, Fidel Castro has finally seen a revolutionary movement achieve success in his perceived area of influence. Amid a growing tide of democratization of other nations in the region, the revolutionary government the Nicaraguan Sandinistas created has kept alive for Cuba the dream of a revolutionary Latin America able to throw off the yoke of the "imperialist" Americans to the north. Soviet support for the Sandinistas was slow in coming, and in this particular instance, Cuba had more to gain by ensuring the survival of the revolution than did the Soviets. As a long time proponent of revolution in Latin America, the continued existence of the Sandinista government is especially critical to Cuba, particularly following the successful invasion of Grenada and its return to a democratic form of government. The Soviet Union, while supportive of the Sandinista revolution for ideological reasons, is much more interested in the security problems it raises for the U.S. and the resulting damage to U.S. influence and prestige in the Western Hemisphere. However, they must be extremely careful to avoid direct superpower confrontation with the U.S. when supporting any military actions in this region. Cuba would almost certainly continue to support the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua in post-Fidel Castro foreign policy. The Socialist institution places great importance on nurturing revolution in Latin America patterned after the Cuban experience and also enjoys the security problems

created for the U.S. and allies in the region. There is every reason to believe that current Cuban policies in the Western Hemisphere would continue unchanged regardless of the successor to Fidel, but Cuban adventurism in other areas of the world would decrease unless such adventurism was directed by the Soviets to achieve Soviet foreign policy objectives.

Before any hypothesis can be made regarding future U.S. policies toward a post-Fidel Castro Cuban government, it is important to understand the development of current policies. As noted previously, the revolutionary government of Fidel Castro was not initially perceived as socialist, or even, especially anti-U.S. After Castro nationalized over \$1.5 billion in U.S. assets without adequate repayment, failed to receive the U.S. ambassador for several months, cancelled promised elections, and signed a trade agreement with the U.S.S.R., the United States took actions to punish Cuba with economic sanctions. Relations worsened when American owned refineries were nationalized by Castro following a refusal to process Soviet crude oil, and diplomatic relations were finally completely severed in 1961 when Cuba demanded that the U.S. reduce its embassy staff in Havana. Castro survived the Bay of Pigs challenge and several CIA inspired assassination attempts and needed no further proof of the U.S. desire to see his regime overthrown. October 1962 saw the U.S. and the Soviet Union go to the brink of war over

Soviet missiles in Cuba and although the U.S. was successful in forcing the removal of the missiles, the Soviet inspired arms build-up in Cuba continued.

U.S. policy vis-a-vis Cuba remained strictly adversarial throughout the remainder of the 1960's and into the 1970's. President Johnson sent U.S. troops into the Dominican Republic to prevent "another Cuba" in the Caribbean and continued to support covert assassination attempts against Castro. Richard Nixon's administration also confronted the "Cuba problem" when intelligence reports indicated a build-up of Cienfuegos Naval Base and the possibility of its use as a base for Soviet strategic submarines. Cuban intervention in Angola created problems for the Ford presidency, increasing tensions between Cuba and the United States. President Jimmy Carter, in seeking to improve relations with Cuba, succeeded in reinstituting subdiplomatic ties by opening a U.S. Interests Section in Havana and allowing the establishment of a Cuban Interests Section in the United States. Although future events would preclude the resumption of full diplomatic relations between the two countries, the establishment of the interests sections did benefit the United States. Edward Gonzales notes that the Carter policy ended "sixteen years of U.S. isolation from Cuba. With the stationing of the U.S. Interests Section in Havana, communication with the Castro regime was facilitated, and the U.S. government became far

better informed regarding developments on the island. Additionally, a byproduct of the thaw was the return of tens of thousands of Cuban exiles to their homeland on brief visits, which in turn precipitated the surge of political unrest that suddenly confronted the regime in 1979-80, and which ended with the mass exodus of over 125,000 Cubans in the 1980 Freedom Flotilla."⁴

The Carter Administration's initiatives toward normalizing relations with Cuba subsequently ended with Cuba's involvement in Ethiopia, the discovery of Mig-23's in Cuba, the presence of a brigade-sized unit of Soviet ground troops on Cuban soil, and Cuban support of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Since assuming the presidency in 1981, the Reagan administration has threatened an invasion of Cuba, invaded Grenada and fought Cuban "construction workers," increased U.S. military presence in Central America, and supported the anti-Sandinista rebels attempting to oust the Cuban-backed Nicaraguan government of Daniel Ortega. If the long term U.S. policy goal was to eradicate Communism on the island of Cuba, or more likely, to confine Castro's influence and revolutionary ideals to Cuba, then seven presidential administrations have failed to define a successful policy to achieve those goals.

With the foregoing as a brief analysis of where U.S./Cuban relations stand today, can any conclusions be drawn regarding the character of U.S./Cuban relations after

Fidel Castro? Fidel Castro's hatred of the U.S. is well documented and is most likely shared by his brother Raul and those who fought alongside the Castro brothers during the revolution. In the twenty-seven years that this regime has been in power, it can be assumed that anti-U.S. feeling has become institutionalized not only in the governing hierarchy, but throughout a major portion of the society. Castro has gone to great lengths to blame many of Cuba's problems, particularly economic problems, on the United States and equally great lengths to portray the Soviets as the supporters of the Cuban revolution and economic benefactors. While Fidel Castro has been the leader of the Cuban people, an entire generation has grown to adulthood fearing the United States as the major threat to Cuba's security and placing the blame on the United States for the economic deprivation the society must endure. While potential successors to Fidel may share his hatred of the United States, less charismatic leadership would experience problems in transferring dissatisfaction with everyday conditions to a nationalistic hatred of America and U.S. economic policies.

There is no question that Cuba today presents a security risk to the United States, both as a destabilizing influence in Central America, and as a potential threat to sea lines of communication from Gulf Coast ports in the event of a conflict in the NATO arena. VADM MacDonald,

while serving as Commander-in-Chief Atlantic, voiced his concern over Cuban interdiction of seaborne supplies destined for a European war theater and pointed out that in the first 180 days of a war in Europe, 2300 merchant ships per month would be required to reinforce and resupply the war effort. Of these 2300, 800 would carry military cargo and 1500 would haul general economic cargos, and of the 2300 total, 70% would sail from Gulf ports.⁵ Cuba's Soviet-made Foxtrot submarines and Osa patrol boats carrying anti-ship missiles could cause considerable problems for shipping in the Gulf of Mexico and the Florida Straits. In a European war scenario, the assets required to neutralize the threat from Cuba could certainly be used more appropriately elsewhere.

The departure of Fidel Castro from the leadership role in Cuba poses several policy alternatives for the U.S. First, depending on who replaces Fidel, the United States could push for improved relations with the new government. Second, the United States could seize the opportunity of a succession crisis to launch an invasion of Cuba and solve the "Cuba problem" militarily. Or third, and most preferable, the United States could develop a long-term strategy with the goal of reducing Soviet influence in Cuba and elsewhere in the region.

Examining the first option, it is assumed that Raul Castro will, at least initially, replace his brother Fidel

as leader of the Communist Party of Cuba and head of the Cuban government. As noted earlier, Raul is more ideologically pure than Fidel and would probably not see any advantage to expanded diplomatic relations with the United States. The Interests Section already in place in Havana has caused problems for the Cuban leadership by allowing Cuban refugees in the United States to visit relatives still living in Cuba. A new regime would probably not want to risk a repeat of the widespread dissatisfaction which resulted in the Mariel "Freedom Flotilla" of 1980. Resumption of trade between the two countries could play a role in improved relations, however, trade implies the movement of goods between both parties. Sugar is Cuba's major exportable crop, but the United States has a well developed sugar industry of its own. Cuba's people are hungry for consumer goods but the importation of American goods without a suitable Cuban export to the United States would create a balance of payments problem for Cuba and decrease already short supplies of hard currency. The Cuban economy is closely tied to the Soviet and East Bloc economies through COMECON and it has been estimated that Cuba exports 72% of its total production to the Soviets while it imports from them approximately 60% of its total consumption.⁶ The U.S.S.R. is the single biggest buyer of Cuban sugar, for which it pays a preferential price. It is also the major supplier of crude oil to Cuba, who buys at a

price of approximately 50% of the current world market price.⁷ Based on the foregoing, it is evident that for Cuba and the United States to develop any kind of meaningful trade relationship is almost impossible. The political price of improving trade and diplomatic relations with Cuba would be high for any U.S. administration that attempted such a policy.

The second option to be examined is that of the United States launching a full scale invasion of Cuba to overthrow the government militarily. This option, while appealing to some, would cause several problems for the United States. First, would be the military assets required to successfully carry out such a mission. Cuba is the most heavily armed nation in the Caribbean and Central America with a regular army of approximately 161,000 troops and reserve forces capable of mobilizing another 130,000 troops. This number does not include the Militias and Territorial Troops (MTT) estimated to number 400,000 to 500,000 men and women.⁸ Cuba has received large amounts of military aid from the U.S.S.R. ranging from surface to air missiles to submarines and fighter aircraft. In addition to military aid, the Soviets have a brigade of ground troops estimated to number 2600, and numerous military advisors and civilian technical advisors. Such an invasion would be very costly to the United States in terms of men and equipment necessary to ensure victory.

A second problem associated with an invasion of Cuba would be the damage done to relations between the United States and other nations in Central and South America. Edward Gonzales addresses the issue of potential damage to Mexico and Venezuela and says

"Both of these countries have emerged as new regional powers in the Caribbean Basin, with Venezuela currently serving as a pivotal U.S. ally in El Salvador, whereas Mexico possesses perhaps even greater potential as a stabilizing regional force. Furthermore, not only the governments of these two countries but also other Latin American and Caribbean governments as well would most likely be confronted with major domestic disturbances were the United States seen as engaged in military aggression against Cuba."9

To set up an effective naval blockade of the island would require naval ships and air assets that are already deployed to other potential areas of conflict, presenting a third problem for this course of action. Naval assets are already stretched thin in the Indian Ocean, Persian Gulf, and Mediterranean areas. To redeploy these assets to support an invasion of Cuba would create a power vacuum in the above mentioned areas. A United States/Cuba conflict could lead the Soviets to try to reduce pressure on Cuba and create problems for the United States by starting military actions in other areas of strategic importance thereby diverting additional U.S. assets from assigned areas of responsibility. In a worst case scenario, the Soviets could decide that they have invested too much economic and military aid in Cuba to allow the United States to overthrow

the regime and subsequently enter the conflict themselves. The presence of a Soviet brigade and numerous Soviet "technicians" in Cuba would create additional problems for an invading force and the safety of troops and citizens could be another factor leading to Soviet military intervention. Uncontrolled escalation could ultimately push the superpowers over the nuclear threshold resulting in global nuclear war. It is clear that the risks of an all out military invasion of Cuba far outweigh the benefits of such a course of action, however, use of military force could be utilized in support of Cuban dissidents in the event of an internal upheaval.

Should the dissident element in Cuba gain enough strength to challenge the Cuban leadership, the United States should not discount the option of aid to the dissident movement. A power struggle following the demise of Fidel Castro could provide the environment such an element would need to overthrow the Communists from within. The United States could support such a group with covert aid initially, and if the situation warranted, direct military intervention could be considered. The Bay of Pigs incident and the U.S. refusal to commit the necessary air assets to support the dissident invasion provide a valuable lesson in this arena. Covert support of an internal upheaval would certainly be preferable to overt military action in such a scenario.

The third U.S. policy alternative for dealing with a post-Fidel Castro regime could be the development of a long-term strategy for economic growth and further democratization of the Caribbean Basin and Central America, and reduction of Soviet influence in Cuba, and the region as a whole. Such a policy would require long-term commitment and consistency by succeeding presidential administrations to hope to be effective. The Reagan administration's Caribbean Basin Initiative is a positive step in the direction necessary to encourage economic stability and self sufficiency throughout the region. The fiscal year 1987 budget requests \$1.5 billion to achieve the following three objectives of the Caribbean Basin Initiative: 1.) to promote short-term economic and financial stabilization; 2.) to encourage production, trade, and investment in nontraditional exports; and 3.) to enhance production, management, and marketing capacities of the private sector.¹⁰

Educational assistance is an area in which the United States could expand its efforts and reap great rewards. The Cuban government currently sponsors thousands of students from Latin America, Africa, and Eastern Bloc countries who study in Cuba. The United States could adopt a similar program for Caribbean and Central American students to travel to the United States and study on government scholarships thereby obtaining personal insight into

American democracy and the American people. Such a program would be relatively inexpensive, but could provide tremendous dividends in the future.

Another area in support of this alternative could be the expansion of information to the Cuban people. Radio Marti, a service of the United States Information Agency, brings credible world news to the island nation and presents an alternative view of world events than that provided by government operated radio and newspapers in Cuba. American television beamed to Cuba could provide the Cuban people with a view of American life and point out many of the areas in which the Cuban system does not work for its people. Any dissatisfaction created among the populace could eventually work to the benefit of the United States.

As noted above, the CBI is a step in the right direction, but it should be the cornerstone of a much broader, long-term approach to the problem confronting the U.S. government. The long range goal of U.S. strategy regarding Cuba, as previously stated, should be the reduction of Soviet influence and a more favorable attitude towards the United States and other countries of the Western Hemisphere. The United States should target the small, but powerful middle class elements of Caribbean and Central American countries as the group to receive the educational assistance and information so necessary to properly contrast the differing political and economic systems. The political

leaders of the United States would have to understand that such a process would be tedious and no immediate results would be apparent, however, consistency in policy and goals would be imperative to eventually achieve the stated objectives. Although such a policy could not directly target groups in Cuba, the successes achieved in other Caribbean countries could eventually create dissatisfaction and dissidence within Cuba.

In summary, while Fidel Castro appears to be in good health and could conceivably continue to govern Cuba for another 15-20 years, he will one day die and a succession crisis will confront the hierarchy of Cuba. The most likely successor to Fidel is his brother Raul, depending, of course on his health situation and age at the time of Fidel's demise. Raul is not as charismatic, intelligent, or as well liked by the Cuban people as Fidel and this could cause him some serious problems in the future. If Raul proves unable to govern successfully, his wife, Vilma Espin, is a possibility, or more likely, a ruling junta formed of members of the Councils of Ministers and State could govern or fill an interim void until a successor to Fidel could be chosen. Cuba's foreign policies and domestic policies would see some changes in a post-Fidel era, due in large part, to the importance of Fidel himself in the formulation of policies, and his ability to convince the Cuban people to

struggle to achieve his personal vision of Cuba as a world power.

Fidel's successor, if less charismatic and less well liked, would find it difficult to convince the Cubans to sacrifice for "internationalist" adventures in the foreign policy realm, and would probably also have difficulty controlling domestic dissatisfaction if the Cuban economy did not improve dramatically. The reasons leading to possible changes in Cuba's foreign and domestic policies could lead to changes in U.S. policies toward Cuba, as well. Cuba is a major security problem for the United States and U.S. interests in the Western Hemisphere. If Fidel's successors find it difficult to engage the Cuban people in fewer internationalist intervention activities, the United States would have fewer problems accepting Cuba as a responsible nation. While full diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba are probably not politically feasible in the near future, bi-lateral talks could help decrease tensions between the two nations and could eventually lead to more "normal" relations. Cuba has been a foreign policy problem for President Reagan and his six predecessors, and that situation is not likely to change to any great degree with the passing of Fidel Castro.

NOTES

1. "Fidel Castro Address," Foreign Broadcast Information Service, 10 February 1986, pp. Q11-Q12.
2. Alvin Z. Rubenstein, "Yugoslavia and the Non-Aligned World," Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J., 1971, p. 301.
3. Jorge I. Dominguez, "Cuban Foreign Policy," Foreign Affairs, Fall 1978, pp.89-90.
4. Edward Gonzales, "U.S. Policy, Objectives and Opinions," in Cuba, Internal and International Affairs, ed. by Jorge I. Dominguez, p. 197.
5. Georges Fauriol, "Cuba Project," Georgetown University, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1984, p. 35.
6. "Mother Russia's Son," Economist, Vol. 283, No. 7242, 19 June 1982, pp.95-96.
7. Gonzales, p. 211.
8. Juan M. del Aguila, Cuba: Dilemmas of a Revolution, p. 160.
9. Gonzales, p. 200.
10. Elliot Abrams, Statement of the Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs before the Subcommittee on Oversight of the House Ways and Means Committee, Washington, D.C., 25 February 1986, p. 2.

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